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FOR NEA/ARP AND NEA/I; LONDON FOR TSOU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/02/2016

TAGS: PREL PGOV KU IZ

SUBJECT: AMIRI ADVISOR WELCOMES RICE-STRAW VISIT TO IRAQ;
CDA RESTATES U.S. POSITION ON AL-SADR

REF: A. KUWAIT 1060

B. STATE 29931

C. STATE 27111

D. KUWAIT 224

Classified By: CDA Matt Tueller for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

1. (SBU) During an April 3 meeting on other issues, Political Advisor to the Amir Mohammed Abul Hassan queried the Charge about the success of the Secretary and British Foreign Secretary in encouraging the Iraqis to form a coalition government. Drawing from the Secretary's roundtable with the traveling press, the Charge briefed him on the Secretary's and Straw's meetings and the perception of some Iraqis that they have not been given ample recognition for what they have achieved under very difficult circumstances. He added that Straw, coming from a parliamentary system, was able to offer sound advice on establishing a coalition government and the types of signals that can be sent during the process. Abul Hassan welcomed the U.S. and UK visit to Iraq and commented that Amir Shaykh Sabah uses every available opportunity to engage Iraq on forming a government and promoting stability. The Amir has passed similar messages to Iraqi religious leaders such as Al-Sistani.

2. (C) Continuing the discussion on religious leaders, the Charge restated U.S. concerns about Muqtada Al-Sadr and his negative influence on Iraq's political transformation. He said Al-Sadr and Jaysh Al-Madhi were using intimidation and violence to solidify power and needed to be constrained. He urged the GOK not to give any credibility to Al-Sadr by receiving him at high levels. Abul Hassan agreed that Al-Sadr's behavior was harmful, but suggested that a consistent message from the region's leaders would "drive the point home" about his need to abandon violence and play a productive role in Iraq's development. He said the Amir made this point clear during Al-Sadr's January visit to Kuwait (ref D).

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